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## **Mayor Coleman Highlights City Deconstruction Efforts**

Creating Jobs and Paving the Way for 44 New Affordable Housing Units, Deconstruction is the Green Approach to Breaking-Down Old Buildings

SAINT PAUL – Mayor Chris Coleman, along with Ward Three Councilmember Pat Harris and community organizations, praised the City of Saint Paul and their partners for conducting a pilot program that explores the use of deconstruction in Saint Paul.

Deconstruction, as opposed to traditional demolition, involves the careful dismantling of residential and commercial buildings with the goal of recycling or preserving reusable materials, resulting in a waste diversion rate considerably higher than the typical 70 percent. The pilot began with training workshops for city staff by Dave Bennink, deconstruction expert and RE-USE Consulting owner. City staff then worked with The NetWork for Better Futures to train laborers to disassemble a building in the correct sequence and handle, organize and prepare materials for resale or recycling. Four properties including two from the City of Saint Paul, one from Macalester College and one from Project for Pride in Living are being deconstructed as part of the pilot.

"Deconstruction is the green approach to an old problem. With this pilot, the City is creating new jobs, while reducing the impact of redevelopment on the natural environment by diverting large quantities of construction waste from landfills to recycling or reuse" said Mayor Coleman.

"We thank the City of Saint Paul, Macalester College, Northwest Area Foundation and Bigelow Foundation for their generous support of this innovative endeavor. This pilot created jobs for five at risk, unemployed Saint Paul residents who now have the ability to contribute to their families in a more meaningful and productive manner. Deconstruction demonstrates there is a cost effective alternative to dumping tons of materials in landfills. We hope this practice will be adopted by cities and counties across Minnesota which would help us achieve our long term goals of a dramatic reduction in waste, more jobs for the unemployed, and a better environment for our neighborhoods" said Steve Thomas, Chief Executive Officer, NetWork for Better Futures.

At the site of today's event where Project for Pride in Living will build affordable housing, Steve Cramer, Executive Director and President, Project for Pride in Living, said "Demonstrating the environmental and job creation value of deconstruction at the future site of a 44 unit, affordable housing project brings together many community development priorities for Saint Paul in one place and at one time. Project for Pride in Living is grateful for the support of City leaders in making the future housing possible, and for their leadership in promoting green jobs for community residents."